

SENATE UNIT BACKS WAR-FUND CUTOFF

Deadline Would Be End of
Year Provided Hanoi
Freed Prisoners

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Special to The New York Times

WASHINGTON, April 17—

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted today to back a cutoff of funds for all hostilities in Indochina after this year provided Hanoi releases all American prisoners of war.

Such a cutoff is considered unlikely to come about, both because of Hanoi's refusal to release the prisoners and because of Congressional obstacles—a close fight in the full Senate and resistance if the proposal reaches the House. But Senators saw its importance as symbolic, a gesture of protest against renewed American bombing of North Vietnam.

The cutoff plan was attached by the committee as an amendment to a bill authorizing funds for the State Department, and the United States information agency at the suggestion of Senators Frank Church,

Democrat of Idaho, and Clifford P. Case, Republican of New Jersey.

It would not take effect however, unless North Vietnam agreed to release all American prisoners of war.

Meanwhile, in another show of rising antiwar sentiment here a nationwide campus strike was called for Friday by the National Student Association to protest the renewed [Page 20.]

Rogers Defends Policy

The action in the Foreign Relations Committee today came after it heard the Administration's policy defended by Secretary of State William P. Rogers.

The fund-cutoff amendment, which now goes to the Senate floor for what is expected to be a close fight, was adopted by the committee by a vote

of 9 to 2 with two Senators—William B. Spong Jr., Democrat of Virginia, and John Sherman Cooper, Republican of Kentucky—voting "present" but taking no stand on the issue.

Voting for the amendment, in addition to Senators Case and Church, were the Democratic Senators Stuart Symington of Missouri, Claiborne Pell of Rhode Island, Edmund S. Muskie of Maine and J. W. Fulbright of Arkansas and the Republican Senators Jacob K. Javits of New York and Charles H. Percy of Illinois.

Senator George D. Aiken of Vermont, the senior Republican on the committee, said he voted against the amendment because it would amount to "accepting North Vietnamese terms for a settlement."

Seen as Poor Timing

Senator Cooper said he voted "present" because he felt it inappropriate to advance such a proposal at a time when "we are engaged in a battle that could affect the fate of our forces." A similar reason was offered by Senator Spong for voting "present."

While not in direct retaliation for the Administration's decision to resume the air war over North Vietnam, the committee's adoption of the amendment was admittedly influ-

enced by the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong over the weekend. The amendment had been under discussion for some weeks by Senators Case and Church, and Senator Case said "we decided to move a little sooner than otherwise planned" in offering the amendment "in view of the events of the past few days."

Democrats Restrained

While the amendment was approved overwhelmingly by the committee, the stronghold of the Vietnam doves in the Senate, the defection of Senators Aiken and Cooper, two of the most respected Republican doves, served to underscore a shift that seems to be develop-

ing in the coalition of Vietnam critics in the Senate.

The shift became noticeable during Mr. Rogers's appearance. Republican Senators identified as critics of the war, such as Senators Cooper, Case, Javits and Percy, notably refrained from criticizing the Administration's decision to bomb Hanoi and Haiphong.

Even Democratic doves on the committee were relatively restrained. Mr. Symington and Mr. Church briefly pursued indecisive lines of questioning and then departed, leaving Senator Fulbright, the committee chairman, alone to press criticism of the Administration.

The hearing started on a contentious note as Senator Ful-

bright refused to allow Mr. Rogers to read a prepared statement on the military aid program—the ostensible subject of the hearing. Over Mr. Rogers's protests, Senator Fulbright ordered the statement—almost identical to one already presented to the House Foreign Affairs Committee—placed in the committee record.

Use of Pursestrings

By the end of the three-hour hearing, Mr. Rogers, apparently sensing that the Republicans were on his side and that Senator Fulbright was isolated in his criticism, was throwing questions back at the Senators and chiding them for not criticizing North Vietnam for its

"massive invasion" of South Vietnam.

Apparently realizing that Mr. Rogers had stolen the initiative, the committee doves, with some prodding from their aides, grouped at a closed-door meeting later in the day around the cutoff amendment.

As explained by Senator Church, the amendment would use the Congressional power of the pursestring "to bring about an orderly withdrawal of American troops from Indochina." At the same time, he said, it would "put Hanoi on notice that release of the prisoners could lead to an orderly termination of war."

The amendment, Senator Church said, was designed

to carry out the general policy laid down in an amendment adopted by the Senate Majority Leader M. Mansfield, adopted by Congress in modified form last year, calling for prompt withdrawal of American forces subject to the release of prisoners of war. Since President Nixon had chosen to disregard the Mansfield amendment, he said it was decided to resort to the Congressional control of funds to force a withdrawal policy.

Technically, the amendment only speaks about an end to American hostilities. But as interpreted by both Senators Church and Case, the amendment contemplated the withdrawal of all American forces except military advisers.